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# Explaining the Resilience of the Balochistan Insurgency

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# EXPLAINING THE RESILIENCE OF THE BALOCHISTAN INSURGENCY

By

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## ABSTRACT

The Balochistan Insurgency is an enduring armed and nationalist struggle between Baloch Insurgents and the Pakistani government, embroiling Pakistan in five insurgencies since 1948. This research aims to analyze why the current insurgency has outlasted its predecessors by over two-fold, with over fifteen years passing since the most recent conflict erupted. Using historical primary source news articles from 1973-1977, secondary research, insurgency trend data, and the data from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD); this study examines the evolution of the current conflict and analyzes how and why the contemporary insurgency is far more resilient. This study finds that the support base for the ongoing insurgency has become more robust and expansive, and suggests that this aspect unique to the current conflict is the major contributor to the insurgency's endurance. The findings suggest the following reasons for an increased support base that in turn contribute to the resilience of Balochistan insurgence: first, the movement is now lead by an expanding middle class; second, there is no violent inter-group rivalry among the separatist actors; third, the support platform has expanded to include cyberspace and social media; fourth, the current insurgency adds the Gwadar Port as an additional and urbanized grievance; and fifth, pre-existing grievances have yet to be resolved. The current insurgency's distinct manifestation reflects a change in Balochistan's status quo through a wide-ranging engagement of popular support in contrast to the past.

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

On November 23<sup>rd</sup> 2018, insurgents attacked a Chinese consulate in Karachi, the provincial capital of Sindh province of Pakistan, in a notable attempt to undermine the Chinese investment in the area.<sup>1</sup> It is not the first militant strike against the Chinese presence in Pakistan, and it is unlikely to be the last. The attacks come in the midst of an ethno-nationalist insurgency that has devastated the Balochistan province in Pakistan over the last fifteen years. It is the fifth conflict of its kind to take place in Balochistan. For decades Baloch separatists have fought the Pakistani government, military, and security forces over greater provincial autonomy. The most recent manifestation of the conflict has become the longest and most violently sustained insurgency in Pakistani history. Despite this, few have ever heard of Balochistan, and even fewer are familiar with the ongoing insurgency. Yet, the situation of Balochistan holds significant implications for South Asia, which reaches into some of the world's most powerful stakeholders.

To understand what gives Balochistan its regional momentum, one must first look towards its geography. Balochistan is situated in a geopolitical hotspot, bordering Iran and Afghanistan, and securing most of Pakistan's access to the Arabian Sea. It is also within comfortable proximity to India and the Strait of Hormuz. The province houses major energy and mineral reserves, supplying 36% of Pakistan's energy needs (Khan, 2009). It is these features, the geopolitical and economic potential, that have brought investment into Balochistan, especially via China and its "One Belt, One Road"

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<sup>1</sup> For more information see: Ahmad, M., & Masood, S. (2018, November 23). Chinese Presence in Pakistan Is Targeted in Strike on Consulate in Karachi.

initiative,<sup>2</sup> and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project. The centerpiece of such developments is the Gwadar Port, an economic and strategic project built in Balochistan's Gwadar city, designed to attract international prospects to Pakistan. While this already makes China a crucial player in the Balochistan case, China's establishment in Pakistan consequently holds security ramifications for India, as both countries see each other as rival powers. The Gwadar Port can be seen as another installment of the "String of Pearls" theory, the Chinese encirclement of India through naval installations on bordering countries including Myanmar, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and now, Pakistan (Dabas, 2017).



Image: China's "String of Pearls" around India  
Dabas, M. (2017, June 23). Here Is All You Should Know About 'String Of Pearls', China's Policy To Encircle India.

<sup>2</sup> The "One Belt, One Road" initiative is China's largest project with ambitions to connect over 60 countries through Chinese-led economic and strategic investments.

What makes Pakistan distinctly important is its direct access to India. It is important to note that China's border with India does not provide any real access due to the Himalayan mountain range, which serves as a geographic barrier between the two countries. As a result, the Gwadar Port creates a unique theatre for Chinese intelligence against India. India's own response to the Chinese project is the Indian-invested Chabahar Port in Iran (Umbreen & Jahangir, 2015).

Outside of Chinese and Indian interests in Balochistan lie the clear security implications for Pakistan, which faces its largest and most resource-rich province undergoing a state of war. This puts a serious internal stability threat on Pakistan, threatening state legitimacy. The presence of China in Balochistan, coupled with Pakistan's critical need for Chinese investment, also puts significant pressure on the state to deal with the insurgency. While the conflict holds limited spilling into Afghanistan and Iran (Weinstein, 2017), this internal security pressure elevates Pakistan's threat perception on India. Historically, the state embraces an India-centric threat perception, in which it views India as its greatest threat and rival since their origin in the bloody partition in 1947. The Balochistan insurgency, therefore, encompasses and augments a pre-existing security threat that can destabilize the region.



Image: Map of Balochistan

Hashmi, W. (2018). 'Fierce and Warlike': Could the Baloch Separatist Movement Remain Pakistan's Longest Insurgency?

The conflict has many dimensions that transcend its physical location, but it is important to remember that it is not the first Baloch insurgency to plague the province. It is, however, the longest. The history of the province is critical to understanding what makes the region prone to the same separatist insurgency: Balochistan was essentially annexed by Pakistan after the 1947 partition that split India and Pakistan into separate states. It was known as the State of Kalat before it became a province of Pakistan. The Khan of Kalat, the then ruler of the State of Kalat, viewed Kalat's status as a sovereign entity (Chawla 2014, p. 945). This meant that at the partition, he argued that the Baloch regions would return under the Kalat domain, rather than become part of Pakistan.<sup>3</sup> The

<sup>3</sup> In a meeting with Lord Mountbatten, who was the last viceroy of India and orchestrated the negotiations for the partition, the Khan of Kalat referenced the treaty of 1876 which named Kalat as an independent

future Pakistani government rejected this claim, but as neither side reached an agreement, the State of Kalat entered in a Standstill Agreement with the government of Pakistan on August 4<sup>th</sup>, 1947, which recognized Kalat's sovereign status (Chawla 2014, p. 928). Throughout the negotiations, the founder of Pakistan, Mohammed Ali Jinnah, wanted Kalat to merge with Pakistan, but the Khan of Kalat and the representatives in the Kalat Government opposed this idea. By the 27th of March, however, the State of Kalat was forced to accede, marking the end of Kalat's nine-month sovereignty timeline, and the beginning of an extensive sequence of insurgencies (Chawla 2014, p. 950).

In the immediate aftermath of the annexation, the first insurgency occurred from March to September of 1948, in response to the loss of sovereignty.<sup>4</sup> The rebellion lasted little more than a few months, ending in September of 1948 when the insurgents were forced to surrender. The second insurgency was from 1958 to 1959, in response to the implementation of the One Unit Policy, which would have effectively inhibited the Baloch identity (Khan, 2009, p. 1075).

From 1963 to 1969 the third insurgency would arise as Baloch nationalists tried to counter the central government's army posts in key areas throughout Balochistan. By the end of the conflict, the One Unit Policy was abolished, ultimately leading to Balochistan achieving province status in 1970. The fourth insurgency arose from 1973 to 1977, when then-Pakistani president Bhutto disbanded the coalition government in Balochistan while

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sovereign state whose country entered relations with the British Government; while the British held proxy rule in Balochistan, Kalat did not fit the criteria of an Indian State. With the British acceding sovereignty, Khan asserted that the State of Kalat should revert to its prior independence. For more information, see: Chawla, Muhammad Iqbal. "Mountbatten and Balochistan: an Appraisal." *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 75 (2014): 928-57.

<sup>4</sup> Following the forced ascension of Kalat into Pakistan, the brother of the Khan of Kalat mobilized the first Balochistan insurgency with the help of about five hundred Lashkars. The objective was to regain Kalat's independence, but as soon as the Khan of Kalat had signed the merger, the Pakistani military flooded into Pakistan to quell the nationalist uprisings.

raising the military presence in the province. It leads to the end of the “tribal chief” Sardari system, and only drew to a close through a negotiated settlement, in which the army was withdrawn and Baloch leaders released (International Crisis Group, 2006). The fifth insurgency began in 2004 and is currently ongoing. It emerged from a variety of factors including long-standing grievances such as a lack of provincial autonomy and economic exploitation. This history of conflict illustrates the decades-old harbored feelings of marginalization, repression, and injustice of the Baloch people towards the Pakistani government. Many still bear resentment towards the government for forcefully occupying the State of Kalat.

### 1.1 Research Question & Theoretical Argument

The Balochistan insurgency is reaching its 15th year at the time of writing.<sup>5</sup> Research and analysis on insurgency trends favor a government victory the more protracted an insurgency is, suggesting that, given the length of the current insurgency, the government should be progressively overtaking the insurgents. Yet, the current insurgency has outlasted the length of its previous conflicts by over twofold. The research question for this project is to determine why the Balochistan insurgency has lasted as long as it has, and continues to unfold. The research will analyze insurgency trend literature indicative of the rise and fall of insurgencies, and apply such trends to the Balochistan case in order to suggest what factors are keeping the insurgents resilient.

The theoretical argument is therefore the following: given that insurgent scholarship has suggested the importance of popular support for insurgents in allowing

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<sup>5</sup> This research uses 2004 as the start date of the insurgency based on data indicating that the first claimed attack by an insurgent group was in 2004



them to survive, this paper hypothesizes that the protraction of the Balochistan Insurgency is the result of increased and sustained popular support among the insurgents. This research is a qualitative analysis of the Balochistan Insurgency, with a temporal range from 1973 (the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> episode) to the present.

## 1.2 Layout

This thesis is divided into five chapters. The first chapter of this research is the introduction, and will discuss Balochistan's history, its significance, and the thesis overview. This will provide a crucial context for understanding the nature of the insurgency. The second chapter will involve a literature review, which will be divided into two parts: the first part will encompass scholarship on insurgency trends; the second part will focus on literature on the current Balochistan insurgency. The third chapter will provide the research to the theoretical argument. Fourth, this study will discuss and analyze the evidence provided by the research, and conclude, summarize, and provide key findings from the research.

## 1.3 Findings

This research finds that increased popular support has contributed to the resilience of the insurgency. The current insurgency has attained increased support through a variety of ways. First, the insurgency is now lead by an expanding middle class, as opposed to solely tribal leaders. In Balochistan, the middle class refers to the rising young, urban, and educated population. Second, attack data also indicates that there is no inter-group conflict among the various insurgent groups active in the insurgency. This

would mean that there is some level of cohesion in sentiment across all insurgent actors, supporting the first point that the conflict has evolved into a class-level support group, as there is no violent outbidding for support between groups. Third, the methods of supporting the insurgency have expanded to the cyber platform through a robust social media movement. Fourth, the current insurgency adds an additional grievance represented by the Gwadar Port, in which Baloch people see this development similar to colonization due to the influx of foreigners—particularly Chinese workers—that the project has brought to the province. Finally, research has proved that the past grievances have largely not been resolved since the end of the last insurgency, indicating that the Baloch population has not had any alleviation in animosity towards the central government: economic data indicates a high level of underdevelopment of the province, discrimination by the central government, and indiscriminate attacks and human rights violations. These key factors driving the insurgency are symptomatic of a more extensive and broader support base than any past insurgency in Balochistan.

## CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Insurgency Trends: How Insurgents Survive

Insurgencies throughout history are often unique to each case, encompassing a wide variety of strategy, grievances, and goals. However, there are also common factors among insurgencies that help explain the course of an insurgent conflict. This paper will define insurgency as a relatively localized, often disorganized, and violent revolt against

a government carried out by citizens of that government. This section will discuss the various trends and factors that lead to the protraction of an insurgency in order to explain why and how insurgents survive against a government force. This literature review section will inform what factors to apply to the analysis of the Balochistan Insurgency in Pakistan. Key trends discussed in the literature include the length of the insurgency, the ability to secure civilian support, external support, access to resources, sanctuary, intelligence, and acquisition of territory.

Insurgencies throughout time and region are vastly different. According to RAND insurgency study, *How Insurgencies End* by Ben Connable and Martin Libicki, there is no *definitive* marker for how to predict if an insurgency movement is dying down (Connable & Libicki, 2010). However, there are a range of trends that correlate with the trajectory and protraction of an insurgency. The RAND study, for example, found that government chance of victory in an insurgency improves the longer an insurgency occurs (Connable & Libicki, 2010). The study put the average modern insurgency as lasting about ten years, indicating that insurgencies that last longer are far more likely to be reaching an end. Factors such as access to resources are much better guaranteed in government forces, and by outlasting insurgents, the warfare becomes attrition-based. However, there are several other elements that also play a role in the protraction of an insurgency. For example, insurgencies with more than two groups are more likely “have longer, more-violent, and more-complex endings” (Connable & Libicki, 2010, p. xvi), due to competing interests. Therefore, factors such as unification among groups hold implications for the length and outcome of insurgencies.

The ability for either side to ensure civilian security and thereby gain civilian support is perhaps the most crucial factor for determining insurgency resilience. A civilian support base can provide assets such as intelligence, sanctuary, and resources, while at the same time *denying* those to the opposing force. Lynn suggests that the ability for counterinsurgents to gain a civilian support base may be far more difficult than the insurgent ability, because counterinsurgents must both protect the population while fighting to overpower the insurgents, whereas the insurgents “only have to demonstrate they can best protect a population or, far easier, inflict enough mayhem and destruction to demonstrate that the existing authorities cannot” (Lynn, p. 23, 2005). Indeed, this serves to undermine and delegitimize the authorities, and can even force civilians to “deal privately with the insurgent” in order to guarantee security (Galula & Nagl, P. 6, 2010). The insurgents that can consistently establish security for a population tend to gain the support of the *neutral* population as well. This can be a critical advantage for several reasons: first, insurgents are more likely to achieve *voluntary* sanctuary among the population, which Connable and Libicki argue increases the chance of insurgent victory; second, this cuts or staunches any flow of intelligence on insurgent movements from the civilian population to the counterinsurgents. The CIA checklist for determining the chance of success among insurgents considers this to be a marker for counterinsurgent loss (CIA, 1986). Locals within and around the insurgent areas of control are often the most valuable source of intelligence on insurgent movements, as insurgents operate in an often disorganized and decentralized fashion, making their movements difficult to track and unpredictable. A popular support base also provides an important asset of intelligence to the insurgents themselves (Trinquier, P. 55, 2008). Modern insurgencies

also tend to promote support through online networks. As Kilcullen notes, “globalized Internet communication also enables moral, financial and personnel support, creating a strategic hinterland or ‘virtual sanctuary’ for insurgents” (Kilcullen, P. 113, 2006). Given that one of the core findings of this paper is an online, media-based Balochistan support platform, pro-insurgent media campaigns would have direct ramifications for the insurgent support base.

The significance of mobilizing popular support for insurgents is not only emphasized in more modern texts (Lynn, 2005; Galula, 2010; Trinquier, 2008; Jardine, 2004; Kilcullen, 2006), but revolutionary leaders. Mao Zedong and Che Guevara repeatedly highlighted the role of the people in insurgent warfare. While Che Guevara described insurgency as a “War of the masses, a war of the people” (Guevara, P. 16, 2006), Mao continuously referenced the mobilization of the common people as “inseparable” to warfare (Mao, P. 60, 1967; Mao & Griffith, P. 43, 1989).

Intelligence in insurgencies is a critical asset for both sides because it links the ability for counterinsurgents and insurgents alike to employ effective violence: according to both Connable, Libicki (2010), and Lynn (2005), indiscriminate violence leads to a decrease in support for any side utilizing the tactic. Without accurate intelligence, counterinsurgents may use violence against civilians hidden among insurgent forces, as insurgents tend to be far more difficult to distinguish from civilians, leading to greater insurgent support and lower counterinsurgent support. Indiscriminate violence proves an inability to provide security to the civilian population in addition to angering the population for unjust losses. Similarly, the same is true for insurgent forces attacking counterinsurgents, although counterinsurgents (normally, government sanctioned military

or security forces) are almost always easily distinguished from the civilian population due to uniform (Lynn, 2005), an idea linked to what Galula describes as the “fluidity” and “rigidity” associated with insurgent and counterinsurgent positions, respectively (Galula, P. 7, 2010). Gaining the support of the neutral population then can create a powerful cycle of improving forces’ ability to wage war: by providing greater security and winning civilian support, the support results in more assets in the form of sanctuary, intelligence, and manpower, which then improves the ability to effectively wage war.

Another trend related to the endurance of insurgencies is the level of external support that insurgents receive. Jones and Johnston argue that insurgents with outside support are far more likely to outlast counterinsurgent efforts (Jones & Johnston, 2013). External support tends to benefit insurgents, however, Connable and Libicki (2010) also note that inconsistent support can actually cripple an insurgency’s ability to wage war. Their study found that external support that was *sustained* increased the chance of insurgent victory, however inconsistent or partial foreign support made the insurgency more likely to fail. This was due to insurgents developing a dependence on foreign support, and then proving an inability to fill the gap once the support was retracted. Inconsistent, partial, or sporadic support by foreign governments is common in insurgencies, as most external sponsors do so for state interests, which often change throughout the length of insurgencies. According to Jardine, “popular support and external support are substitutes,” meaning that one reduces the need for the other (Jardine, P. 260, 2014). In this sense, the importance of external support is on par with popular support. Indeed, various studies conclude that insurgents with external support are much harder to overcome (Lyall & Wilson, P. 82, 2009; Jones & Johnston, 2013;

Connable & Libicki, 2010). Ultimately, a consistent flow of foreign support has the potential to effectively alter the outcome of an insurgency.

These insurgency trend factors help explain why insurgencies persist and how they may end. They are central to understanding why insurgent groups are able to survive—and sometimes even thrive—against a much bigger and official force. One study argues that the longer an insurgency endures, the more likely it is to end, and the more likely government forces are able to outlast such conflicts (Connable & Libicki, 2010). This paper seeks to understand why the current Balochistan insurgency has outlasted its predecessors by over two-fold. The most notable insurgent trends included popular and external support, as these often were platforms from which to gain access to resources, sanctuary, and intelligence. These factors, applied to the Balochistan case, may provide some insight into why and how the insurgents remain active in an insurgency that has become the most protracted in Pakistan since the creation of the state.

## 2.2 Balochistan: Current Literature

Balochistan has endured constant conflicts since its integration into Pakistan. Repeated insurgency, chronic underdevelopment, and perceived resource exploitation have left the region with a population that feels separate from the rest of Pakistan. This literature review section analyzes current scholarship on the insurgency in order to draw potential parallels, contradictions, or discrepancies between insurgency trend literature and the Balochistan case, particularly in areas of possible increased popular or external

support. Historically, the province has fought four insurgencies since it became part of Pakistan in 1948, however, the fifth and ongoing insurgency is the most protracted conflict by far, initiating in 2004. Research on the Balochistan Insurgency is overwhelmingly focused on the causes of the insurgency and the changes between the past conflicts and the present. All of these themes provide insight into how and why the current insurgency has lasted over fifteen years.

Literature has identified multiple causes for the current insurgency, many of which have been long-standing grievances related to the perceived marginalization of the ethnic Baloch and repression by the Security Forces. Khan and Sana Ullah, for example, analyze the political system in Balochistan, and argue that it is this system that has led to the escalation of violence, as it has left people with no trust in the government (Ullah & Ullah, 2017). The Baloch community has frequently called for greater autonomy from the central government, but many feel that all attempted compromises to provincial autonomy and development have never truly amounted to anything, further instilling a severe lack of trust in the Pakistani government.

In 2010, for example, the government launched the Balochistan Rights Package, which promised heavy development from schools to roads. Immediately after the announcement, people took to the roads to protest, refusing any aid from the government, with the Khan of Kalat explaining that Baloch people do not care for charity, and that sudden investment into Balochistan is “not a substitute for independence” (Khan of Kalat, Al Jazeera Interview, 2012). A population that feels they cannot rely on the central government has unified large groups of people against the rest of Pakistan. Sushant Sareen, a consultant of the Pakistan Project at the Institute for Defense Studies and



Analyses, suggests that “the alienation of the people in the Baloch populated areas of Balochistan with Pakistan appears to be near total” (Sareen, 2010)— an indicator that insurgents likely have significant civilian support. A protestor shouting in the streets of Quetta announced just as much: “Baloch brothers in the government, the army, or the police, quit your jobs and help your brothers who fight for freedom.” (Al Jazeera, 2012) Yet, while the government may have alienated the Baloch people, one author argues that most Baloch are not necessarily separatists— they just want greater autonomy (Grare, 2013). This could suggest that any insurgent civilian support may come from other reasons besides just ideological alignment, such as a better security guarantee from the insurgents. Ultimately, however, projects such as the Balochistan Rights Package did not gain popular support for the central government, but rather intensified the resentment (Mazhar et al, 2012; Sareen, 2010; HRW, 2011).

Other research, such as Alok Bansal’s analysis, include the lack of Baloch participation in economic projects throughout the province as another critical factor to inciting the insurgency (Bansal, 2008). Economic exploitation has given rise to a feeling of injustice among Balochis. Indeed, a Baloch insurgency leader remarked that “we [the insurgents] want to end Punjabi rule over our land, and provide the Baloch people with security, justice, and equality,” (Al Jazeera, 2012) suggesting a perceived disparity between the treatment of the rest of Pakistan and the Balochistan province. Balochistan is home to substantial energy and mineral reserves, fueling 36% of Pakistan’s energy needs (Khan, 2009). Despite this, the royalties returned to Balochistan are significantly less than those of Punjab and Sindh, which receive \$1.65 and \$2.35 per thousand cubic feet of gas supplied, respectively, compared to Balochistan’s \$0.29 (Ullah and Ullah, 2017 &

Khan, 2009). In addition, only 4 out of 28 districts in Balochistan actually have availability to this gas (Khan, 2009). This discrepancy has been a persistent source of tension for Balochis, who feel they are not only being treated unfairly by the central government, but as former Balochistan cabinet minister Hussain Ashraf put it, feel that “they want to eliminate us” (Khan, 2009, p. 1080). Perceived resource exploitation is a factor that continues to fuel resentment towards the central government, feeding into the sentiment of colonization that allows insurgents to thrive from such civilian grievance.

Another contention for the resurgent violence is the case of Gwadar. In Gwadar, via the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project (CPEC), the central government has, with Chinese investments, allowed the building of a port with the desire to turn Gwadar into an international shipping hub. The initial announcement of the project did not resonate well with many Baloch residents, who felt that none of the benefits would flow to the province. With the project over a decade underway, it has still failed to gain any local support. Indeed, an interview with a fisherman describes how the Baloch feel disillusioned by any government assurances of mutual prosperity: “They promised jobs for all of Gwadar’s unemployed people....But the residents here are still unemployed. Some have college degrees, but none of them have jobs” (Al Jazeera, 2012). Instead, the project has brought a wave of Chinese workers into Balochistan, where many locals worry that the influx of foreigners will cause a major demographic change, turning residents into a minority (ICG, 2006; Grare, 2013; Mazhar et al, 2012). For Balochistan, the Gwadar port has increased tensions rather than alleviate any of the socio-economic problems.

Gwadar also symbolizes the lack of Baloch representation in economic projects—when then-President Musharraf signed off on the project with China on March 24th, 2002, he failed to include any Baloch representative (Khan, 2009). The land used for the project was sold off at superficially low rates for development under government land-grabbing schemes that exploited residents' inability to provide official land-ownership documentation (Khan, 2009). This scheme intensified the sentiment of occupation, and has thus presented the port as a megaproject orchestrated for the benefit of the central government, where Baloch residents see Gwadar as an emblem of colonization.

Furthermore, within close proximity of the port, author Adeel Khan describes a “parallel town” with elite amenities intended for settlers and tourists, blocked off by paramilitary checkpoints that deny entrance to locals (Khan, 2009). Within the city of Gwadar itself, there remain signs of serious underdevelopment, and the port has brought more problems than success to the residents, as recounted by a high city official: “Gwadar land has been allocated to the personnel of military and civil bureaucracy. As if that was not enough, now people of the old Gwadar town are threatened [with having] to leave their ancestral land and move elsewhere” (Khan, 2009, p. 1080). Along with provincial autonomy and economic exploitation, the issues surrounding Gwadar have made up a crucial aspect of the grievances that allow the insurgents to gain legitimacy among the Baloch population. Furthering this legitimacy is the government's rejection of these grievances. To put the Balochistan case in perspective, insurgency research suggests that governments that acknowledge local grievances are more likely to win an insurgency (Connable & Libicki, 2010), and the people of Balochistan feel that their grievances have never been addressed.

The government's tactical response to the insurgents is another reason as to why the conflict persists. The repression and perceived brutality of the state's insurgency tactics are central to augmenting and maintaining support for the insurgent cause among the population. The persistent military response to what is largely viewed as a political problem has only made the province more violent and radicalized according to research, and the amount of people who view the *military* as the main hurdle to peace has increased (ICG, 2006 & Grare, 2013). Military and intelligence operations have often included kidnappings and torture to suspected sympathizers, and indiscriminate attacks (ICG, 2006). These tactics alone have incited protests and anger, and are factors that insurgency trend literature argue are more likely to garner insurgent support, creating perceptions of injustice and vengeance among civilians (Connable & Libicki, 2010; Lynn, 2005). In fact, some scholarship points to this repression by the state as the main driver of radicalization among nationalists; even outside of nationalist groups, the state's brutality during the insurgency has accrued sympathizers, who see the state as responsible for the inciting the insurgency (Grare, 2013). In some cities such as Quetta, protesters mostly made up of young women have lined the streets in outrage of the murders and disappearances of their brothers and fathers through state intelligence operations. Most of the disappeared, who's bodies end up dumped on the side of roads weeks, months, or years later, are civilians (Al Jazeera, 2013). One Baloch leader describes it as such: "The army and intelligence agents kidnap them and we know nothing about them for years. The Baloch people live in a state of war" (Al Jazeera, 2013). In addition to the forced disappearances, the military operations have also resulted in massive displacements of Baloch residents (ICG, 2006; Khan, 2009). These activities have culminated in outrage

among civilians, alienating the population from the side of the central government due to injustice and lack of security guarantee.

The current insurgency also holds markedly different aspects from the past insurgencies. While the grievances are essentially the same, the tactics, demographics, and geography of the insurgency have fundamentally shifted. Whereas in the past, the insurgencies held tribal affiliations and were often led by tribal leaders, today the insurgency is led by a vibrant and ever-expanding middle class (Khan, 2009; Grare, 2013; ICG, 2006). While many tribal leaders, including those of the Bugti, Marri, and Mengal tribes<sup>6</sup> support the Balochistan Liberation Army, for example, the BLA does not belong to and is not lead by either tribe (Grare, 2013). Because the leaders of the ethno-nationalist movement are an educated middle class, this has further resulted in two essential differences: first, it has inhibited inter-tribal clashes, as the insurgent groups are not owned by sardars which thus eliminates tribal competition (Khan, 2009). Second, it has shifted the geography of the movement from rural areas to urban, and from the northeast to the southwest (Grare, 2013). Indeed, author Robert Wirsing's research from 2008 suggests that "severe alienation from the Pakistan state was spreading rapidly to the province's urban areas and to growing numbers of educated Baloch youths" effectively transforming the conflict into a wider movement (Wirsing, 2008). This change suggests a much broader support base than in the past, as it includes an entire class of population as opposed to the major stakeholders in the province (sardars). Now, any compromises or settlements to the conflict must involve the participation of at least an entire class of the population. In contrast, while the majority of scholarship indicates greater unity among

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<sup>6</sup> The Bugti, Marri, and Mengal tribes are the three most prominent tribes in Balochistan, often holding political positions and affiliations in the provincial government.

the various insurgent groups, other literature suggests that it may be the contrary: the goals and tactics are fractured (Kupecz, 2012). Ultimately, the isolation of the Balochistan conflict makes it difficult to determine concrete evidence of insurgent movements.

The demographic shift in the current insurgency has also unveiled a change in tactics and ability for insurgents to wage war. First, because the leaders are not only just tribal chiefs, it has made them elusive to the state. Despite allegations, the government has failed to prove any suspicions on the leaders (Al Jazeera, 2013), indicating a lack of effective intelligence—a critical factor in insurgency success (Connable & Libicki, 2010; Lynn 2005). In fact, insurgent leaders have capitalized on secrecy as a central strategy for remaining undefeated. They wage war in a decentralized system, utilizing multiple groups and leaders. Like one Baloch leader explained, “We don’t want to have a command centre. The experience of the Tamil Tigers was a vital lesson. The Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka became like an official army.... They lost everything after years of fighting” (Al Jazeera, 2013). The ongoing insurgency reflects a system in which the insurgents have prepared for a long and asymmetric war. Intelligence is perhaps the most critical asset of counterinsurgents, and consolidating the advantage of secrecy has proved effective in eluding the state and turning civilians against the government through their operations of kidnapping and indiscriminate attacks. This tactic is also reinforced with a new accessibility to weapons, which is a result of the *Mujahideen* and the porous border with Afghanistan (Khan, 2009). Baloch insurgents today are not only better equipped, but better organized to evade state attacks.

While the Balochistan insurgency has had some spilling across borders, and some *indications* of external involvement, the literature on whether the insurgents are receiving foreign aid is split. Some scholars insist that the insurgents are receiving foreign aid or are *very likely* to be receiving foreign aid (Bansal, 2008; Mazahar et al. 2012; Javaid & Jahangir, 2015). While these authors are not able to provide concrete evidence that directly affirms the assertion of external aid, a common reason for suspicion of the fact is the advanced weapons and training of the Baloch leaders, particularly the BLA (Bansal, 2008; Javaid & Jahangir, 2015). Bansal puts the monthly estimated cost of the BLA (citing figures of 40 to 90 million rupees) as one reason indicative of foreign support (Bansal, P. 191, 2008). While the central government believes that Baloch rebels are receiving foreign support, particularly through India, with the exception of the occasional pro-Baloch comment or condemning of Pakistan's handling of the crisis, there remains an absence of hard evidence (ICG, 2013). Substantial literature suggests that even despite foreign interests in the insurgency, there has been no concrete evidence of external aid to the insurgents (Chandran, 2006; Wirsing, 2008; Grare, 2013). In the Al Jazeera documentary, a Baloch leader insisted that they received no foreign aid, but were welcome to accepting any (Al Jazeera, 2013). External support, however, does have implications regarding the length and success of insurgency, as mentioned in the previous section. While insurgents deny that they have been given any foreign support, the state has frequently accused India of supporting the rebellion in Balochistan (Bhattacharjee, 2015). Whether insurgents are receiving external support or not, if the military perceives interference from India, this too can have drastic consequences, suggesting a greater

allocation of military resources and attention to Balochistan in response to an India-centric threat perception.

At the core of the ethno-nationalist struggle is the deep-rooted and shared identity among the Baloch people. The grievances and conflict causes above have only served to reinforce this identity, and further separate the Baloch people from Pakistan. Like the Baloch leader who described the need for a lack of command centre described above, “Perhaps later we may unify our command since we are one ethnic group. We fight to free our people” (Al Jazeera, 2013). Even despite the multigroup-movement and lack of direct communications, the ethno-nationalist movement encompasses a shared identity as the basis for fighting. Many feel that Balochistan is an occupied territory, and for decades locals have fought for greater autonomy, only achieving province status in 1970. Balochis feel that their land has been exploited and their people marginalized, and thus this dynamic has become part of the Baloch struggle, and invigorated a desire for independence. Indeed, Baloch residents and political figures have alluded to the relationship between Pakistan and Balochistan as one of the colonizers and colonized (ICG, 2006). In fact, even Baloch politics are linked to maintaining the ethnic identity: they are secular rather than religious, because the Baloch people “have never felt a threat to their religious beliefs,” but their ethnic identity is constantly under threat, and therefore a secular system, by allowing a nationalist representation, is more unifying to the ethnic identity (Khan, P. 1083, 2009). Religion, while an integral part of Baloch life, does not manifest in the politics like the rest of Pakistan, because Islam is not under threat from the central government, the perceived “enemy” of most Baloch. Author Farhan Siddiqi similarly acknowledges that the dominance of the Punjabis in Islamabad “tended to deny



the existence and identity of peripheral groups such as the Baloch and Sindhis” (Siddiqi, P. 42, 2012). The rigged elections of 2002 were perhaps another direct reason for raising tensions for the insurgent movement: the military attempted at bringing Islamic-based parties to power over the popular nationalist ones, in another effort to crush Baloch nationalism (Grare, 2013). The importance of the Baloch identity is intertwined in nearly every aspect of Baloch life— from politics to insurgency. As tribal leader Nawab Khair Baksh Marri argues, “We are more Baloch than Pakistani” (Al Jazeera, 2012).

### 2.3 Theoretical Argument

The literature on Balochistan is rather limited, often contradictory, and unreliable, encompassing a variety of perspectives regarding the conflict. Common themes include provincial autonomy and Baloch representation, economic exploitation, military tactics, Gwadar, and contrasts between the past and current insurgencies. A consistent underlying theme among Baloch literature appears to be the importance of the ethnic Baloch identity, reinforced throughout time by shared grievances and alienation from the rest of Pakistan. The Baloch identity, amplified by the chronic grievances of the people, has led to the failure of the Baloch population to successfully integrate into Pakistan. This distinct identity allows the insurgents to push for a separatist agenda, as it provides an insurgency cause favorable to people in which they hope to mobilize for support. A cause that serves the interest of the people is necessary for gaining a support base (Galula, P. 45, 2010; Trinquier, P. 49, 1985; Mao & Griffith, 1989).

Furthermore, given the scholarship on insurgencies, research and analysis on insurgency trends suggest securing popular support is critical to an insurgent’s success. Based on this literature highlighting the importance of popular support in sustaining an

insurgency, the following hypothesis is proposed: The protraction of the Balochistan Insurgency is the result of increased and sustained popular support among the insurgents. Popular support is the epicenter of attaining critical assets, such as intelligence, sanctuary, resources, and manpower that allow forces to persist. This hypothesis considers that the current insurgency is marked by a broader and larger movement than in the past, attracting far greater support, in explaining the endurance of the insurgency.

While such literature also suggested that external support is another major factor in sustaining an insurgency, the contradictory reports found in preliminary Balochistan literature on whether the insurgents were receiving external aid or not, and the non-transparent conditions within Pakistan, would make this variable difficult to measure. Therefore, an attempt to evaluate whether foreign intervention plays a role in the conflict will be made in the research, however, given the fractured consensus already present in literature, this factor will serve as an indicator for insurgency endurance.

## 2.4 Methodology

The research for this project includes examining many factors. It is compiled into sections: Economic Data, CT Operations/Human Rights Abuses, Nature of Insurgent Targeting, Insurgency Evolution: Gwadar & Current and Past Insurgencies, and External Support.

First, economic data is gathered. This is in order to address possible defense spending increases or decreases in Balochistan by the Central Government, the reality of the underdevelopment situation, and Balochistan's share of national GDP within relevant

sectors, such as energy and mining. This research will suggest two things: first, it will inform the reality of the grievances related to economic underdevelopment and economic discrimination. It will address whether the economic situation in Balochistan has improved, stagnated, or worsened. It will attempt to address the reach of these economic grievances as well. These factors help inform the extent to which the population of Balochistan has been impacted by sustained grievances, which in turn holds implications for insurgent support levels. Continued grievances alienate a population and supply the insurgency cause, after all. Pre-Existing Grievances, while part of the insurgency cause, holds implications for insurgency resilience, as insurgent literature suggests that in insurgencies where governments do not address local grievances, the government has a lower chance of winning the insurgency, making the insurgency longer and more complicated (Connable & Libicki, 2010). Therefore, the cause of an insurgency does matter in its explaining insurgency resilience.

CT Operations/Human Rights Abuses, similarly, holds implications for whether the central government is alienating a population, or whether the insurgents are doing so. Indiscriminate attacks that impact civilians, as preliminary research states, lower the level of support for the side using those tactics. Therefore, understanding where human rights abuses are occurring and by whom is indicative for evaluating population support.

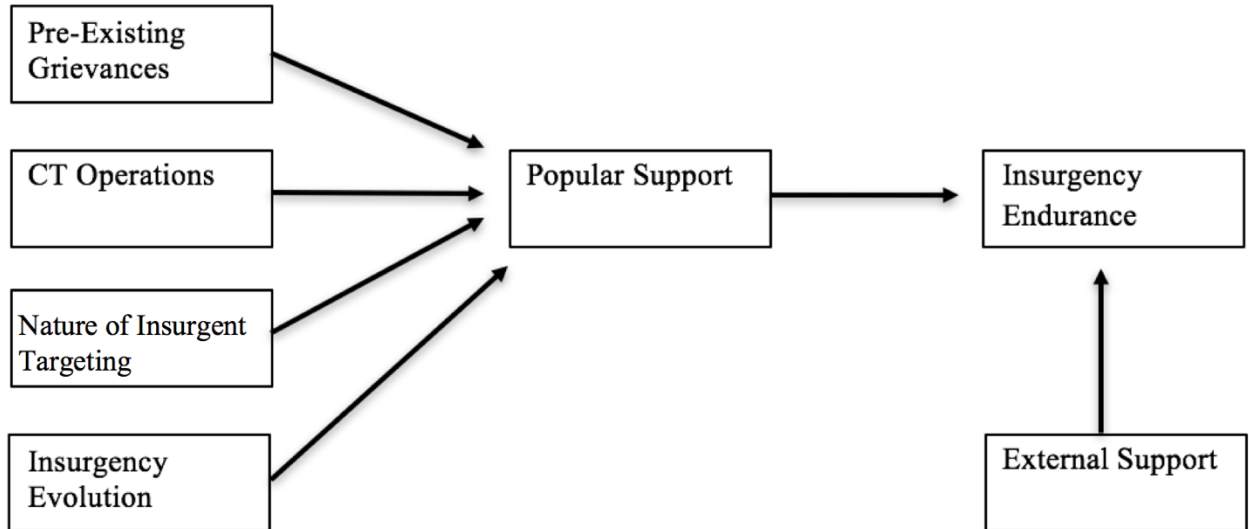
Nature of Insurgent Targeting addresses the insurgent attack targets in order to evaluate whether insurgents are conducting indiscriminate attacks. This section utilizes data recorded in the Global Terrorism Database. Insurgent attack data will show how active the insurgency is numerically, and what/who the insurgent actors are targeting, which holds indications for population support.

Insurgency Evolution: Gwadar & Current and Past Insurgencies will look at how the current insurgency differs from those of the past, in order to determine what factors may be contributing to the persistence of this insurgency. Gwadar is grouped into this category because the grievances related to the Gwadar port are unique to this insurgency, and preliminary research has strongly suggested this has impacted the current insurgency. This section will also look at data on whether the middle class is leading the insurgent groups over tribal leaders, Dawn news articles from the 1973-1977 insurgency, and other changes.

The final section will attempt to address external support for the insurgency. This section utilizes news articles, actor statements, secondary sources, and evidence of attacks outside of Pakistan. External support increases the insurgent chance of outlasting counterinsurgents, and therefore is an important variable for attempting to explain the resilience of the current insurgency in Balochistan.

This research is a qualitative analysis of the Balochistan insurgency. The temporal range for this study is 1973 to the present (2019), encompassing the last insurgency and the current one. The diagram below depicts the causal mechanism for the hypothesis, in which the independent variable, *support*, impacts the dependent variable, the *endurance* of the insurgency.

### Hypothesis Casual Relationship Between Indicators, Popular Support, and Insurgency Endurance



#### Dependent Variable

The dependent variable for this study is the endurance of the insurgency, which is defined as the insurgency length. This is measured by attack data from the Global Terrorism Database, which records the first claimed attack by a Baloch insurgent actor to be in 2004. The endurance is also informed by current news articles confirming the ongoing conflict within the province (GTD is only updated to 2017 data at the time of writing).

#### Independent Variable

The independent variable for this study is popular support, defined as the sympathy, tolerance, advocacy, or backing of the insurgent actor cause. This is measured through four indicators that are indicative of impacting popular support: Pre-Existing Grievances, CT Operations, Nature of Insurgent Targeting, Insurgency Evolution. These

variables are measured through an analysis of primary sources, such as documented interviews, articles, social media, and secondary sources. Following is the operationalization of these proxies:

- The first indicator that effects the popular support is *Pre-Existing Grievances*, measured by an analysis of economic indicators. The data comes largely from an economic report from 1973 – 2000 on provincial GDP shares, and World Bank data. This variable contributes to understanding whether any improvements to the economic conditions in Balochistan were made following the 4<sup>th</sup> insurgency (1973-1977), and whether underdevelopment, economic discrimination, and exploitation continued to persist up until the commencement of the 5<sup>th</sup> insurgency.
- The second indicator is human rights abuses/indiscriminate attacks by the central government forces, or *CT Operations*, measured by an analysis of investigations, testimonies, news articles, and academic sources. Evaluating the credibility of human rights abuses and/or indiscriminate attacks is a factor that insurgent literature suggests is an indicator of insurgent support levels.
- The third indicator is *Nature of Insurgent Targeting*, measured through attack data from the Global Terrorism Database. Nature of Insurgent Targeting is measured to understand the current trajectory of the insurgency, the activity levels, and the insurgent actor targets. This indicator is indicative of support in measuring the level of indiscriminate

and discriminate attacks, and the unity of insurgent actor targets. Insurgent literature suggests these are factors that influence insurgency support.

- The fourth indicator is *Insurgency Evolution*, which analyzes what has changed from the 1973-1977 insurgency. These factors involve middle class leadership and involvement, which is measured through primary source accounts, including documented interviews, social media posts, news articles, as well as secondary sources. The involvement of middle class leadership contributes both to the endurance of the insurgency and is indicative of higher support levels due to the involvement of an entire class as opposed to those with solely tribal affiliations. This variable also includes the implication of the cyber platform as a way of promoting the separatist message, and the new grievance of Gwadar Port.
- The final indicator is *External Support*, defined as support provided to insurgents or counterinsurgents from foreign state actors or foreign non-state actors. External support is measured through an analysis of secondary sources, primary source accounts, actor statements or political rhetoric, and news articles. This variable is not used as a measurement or indicator affecting support, but rather a variable that would affect insurgency length.

## CHAPTER III: RESULTS

### 3.1 Economic Data

An economic data report by Dr. Kaiser Bengali and staff economist Mahpara Sadaqat provides information on province GDP and share throughout the years 1973 – 2000. This data covers the timeframe of the last Balochistan insurgency, which took place from 1973 to 1977, and would then provide some insight into whether any of the economic grievances were addressed following the insurgency.

According to the data,<sup>7</sup> from the start of 1973, Balochistan's share of national GDP was 4.5 percent. By comparison, Punjab was 52.7 percent, Sindh 31 percent, and the North Western Frontier Province (NWFP) 11.7 percent. By 2000, however, Balochistan's share had decreased to 3.7 percent, tying with Sindh with the largest decrease in share by percentage points (Bengali & Sadaqat, P. 46, 2005). It is important to note that Balochistan only encompasses 5 percent of Pakistan's population, however.

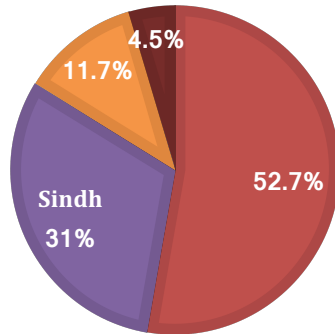
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<sup>7</sup> Data in this section, and used in the graphs, until noted otherwise is gathered from Dr. Kaiser Bengali and Mahpara Sadaqat's report, which was provided by sources including "government ministries, departments, agencies, corporations, and other private entities," as mentioned under "Acknowledgments" (P. 3, 2005).



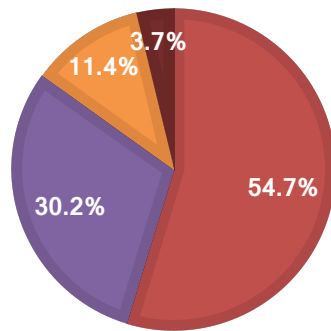
## GDP SHARE 1973

■ Punjab ■ Sindh ■ NWFP ■ Balochistan



## GDP SHARE 2000

■ Punjab ■ Sindh ■ NWFP ■ Balochistan



*Figure 1*

By per capita GDP, Balochistan started off in 1973 with a higher average than Punjab and NWFP, however by 2000, whereas all provinces drastically increased their per capita GDP, Balochistan's essentially stagnated with only a marginal increase comparatively, from 3280 at constant factor cost in 1973 to 3433 in 2000 (Bengali & Sadaqat, P.47, 2005).

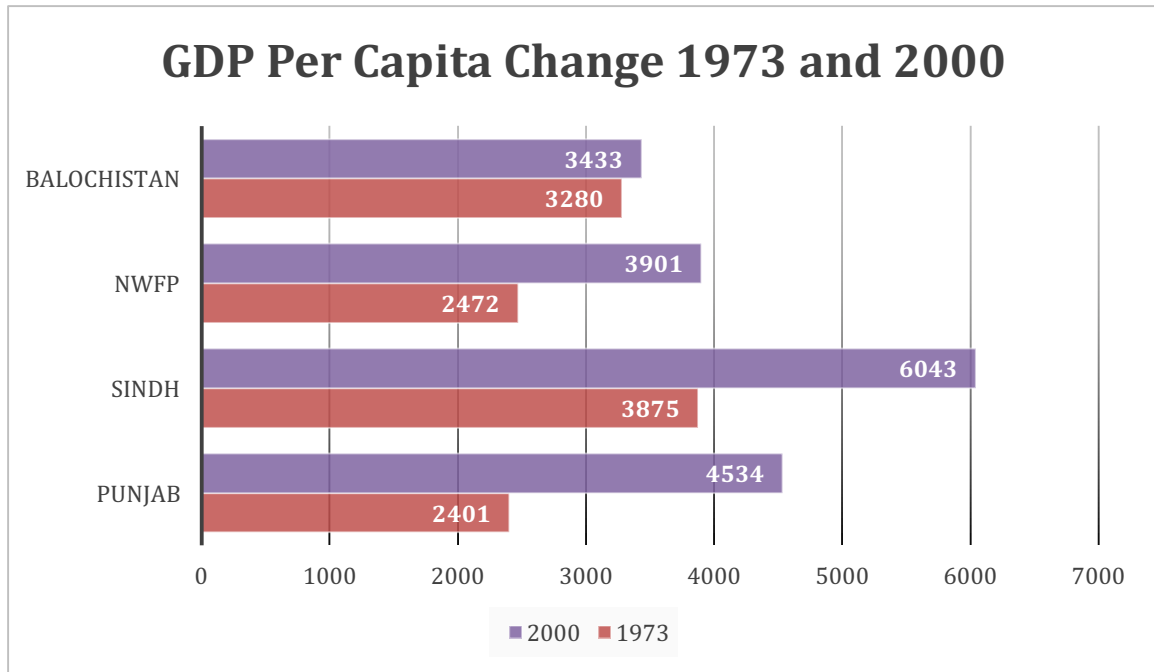


Figure 2

The report also breaks down the economic data by share of produced goods by province. This research will only look at those goods that are relevant to the Balochistan province, such as mining/quarrying and electricity and gas. In the mining/quarrying data (P. 54), Balochistan went from supplying a 31.5 percent GDP share in 1973 to merely 10.9 percent in 2000. The share difference appears to go towards Sindh and NWFP, in part because new natural resource deposits were discovered in these provinces (particularly Sindh) during this time. Under electricity/gas economic data, Balochistan only accounted for 3 percent of GDP share in 1973, only marginally increasing to 3.9 percent in 2000. Yet, Balochistan supplies 36% of the national energy needs, perhaps reflecting a disproportionate GDP share in this sector. Indeed, preliminary research notes that the gas royalties returned to Balochistan were far less than those of Punjab and Sindh (\$1.65 and \$2.35 per thousand cubic feet of gas supplied respectively, whereas Balochistan only received \$0.29); this was in part due to the fact that Balochistan's resources were

discovered earlier and negotiated at unfavorable terms before Balochistan even achieved province status in 1970 (Ullah & Ullah, 2017; Khan, 2009). It is important to note that this report only provides provincial GDP data and not an analysis of what factors produced that data and/or changes. These results, nevertheless, suggest some level of economic inequality between Balochistan and other provinces, especially Punjab and Sindh. In fact, the authors conclude that “on the whole, Balochistan appears – at best – to remain trapped in a low level equilibrium and – at worst – regressing further into under-development” (Bengali & Sadaqat, P. 75, 2005).

Current articles also suggest a development constraint on the province. Last year (2018), the 2018-2019 budget presented by Adviser to the Balochistan Chief Minister on Finance, Dr. Ruqayya Saeed Hashmi, confirmed a funding gap of Rs61.9 billion for its development plans, the equivalent of over 442 million US dollars (Shahid & Jamal, 2018). World Bank data also provides information on Balochistan’s economic situation, noting an array of issues: aside from Balochistan holding the largest poverty ratio of the provinces, its development has been significantly hampered by a lack of structural and planning considerations (World Bank, P.7-10, 2018). For instance, there is insufficient movement on a provincial growth strategy, the entire development planning sector is flawed in its process and evaluation of financial feasibility, there is no coherent strategy for transferring funds within the province, and there is a lack of coordination between the province and district in development projects (World Bank, P.7-10, 2018).<sup>8</sup> This economic data corroborates much of the preliminary and current research on

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<sup>8</sup> For a more comprehensive and in-depth assessment, see *Balochistan, Pakistan Strengthening Budget Management to Improve Education Service Delivery* (pp. 1-38, Rep.). (2018). Washington DC: World Bank Group.

Balochistan's development situation, indicating significant strain in undergoing development projects. However, it also suggests that the underdevelopment issues are rooted in both provincial mismanagement, inequality related to GDP shares in certain sectors, and economic stagnation.

Balochistan appears to continually be plagued with low growth, underdevelopment, and high poverty rates, which would suggest expansive economic-related grievances throughout the province, regardless of whether the central government is at fault for the entirety of those grievances or not. In fact, the perception of discrimination and exploitation by the central government against Balochistan has been widely perceived by ordinary people, as the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) states in their fact-finding mission report:

It was however obvious that the people's perceptions regarding discrimination against them by the federal government, notably an establishment that they saw as being dominated by the Punjab, had played a role in fomenting the deep sense of resentment and anger found in the province. These sentiments had significantly contributed to the new conflict. Citizens meeting the HRCP team also expressed the apprehension that the military wished to establish control over the vast natural resources of Balochistan. (HRCP, P. 2, 2006).

This research section also addresses internal security expenditure in Pakistan (where available) in order to inform both counterinsurgent power, as well as the long-standing grievance of military presence in Balochistan. The HRCP noted that during their fact-finding mission, there were serious complaints about the expansive military presence in the area (HRCP, P.1, 2006). According to retired Pakistani General Talat Masood, in 2017 there was a 10 percent increase in the army budget than in the previous year (Yusufzai, 2017). All provinces have had an increase in security force and law

enforcement expenditure of around 10 to 15 percent. Indeed, the spread of violence from the insurgency has demanded a greater security presence by the central government, thus prompting internal security increases in each subsequent year's budget (Fazl-E-Haider, 2015). An increase in internal security indicates a stronger state response to the insurgency and a greater state allocation of resources. This could also contribute to further resentment among Baloch people due to the already-expansive complaints on military presence in the province, coupled with the military's bad relationship with the public.

### 3.2 CT Operations/Human Rights Abuses

The next section will investigate human rights abuses and state repression claims within Balochistan. This is a powerful factor for not only alienating a population, but in fact turning a population against authorities. A compiled list of twenty academic sources, reports, and articles noted human rights abuses, displacements, and/or forced disappearances by the central government's Security Forces and Intelligence Services in Balochistan.<sup>9</sup>

Some of the sources also determined human rights abuses by militants, tribes, and non-state actors (Fazl-E-Haider, 2015; HRCP, 2006; US Department of State, 2017). Many of those abuses by militants were generally towards Pashtun settlers however, and not the ethnic Baloch population (HRW, 2011); in fact, one report found that while on one hand, the military tactics had reduced the violence against the settlers, on the other, they supported the sustainment of the insurgency among the Baloch population (Fazl-E-Haider, 2015). Abuses by tribes were alleged to also have taken place particularly in the

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<sup>9</sup> Included in references.

Bugti area, although this was denied by Nawab Akbar Bugti, the leader of the Bugti tribe (HRCP, P. 2, 2006). Ultimately, according to a report by the HRCP, credible and substantial evidence indicated that human rights abuses had taken place:

There were alarming accounts of summary executions, some allegedly carried out by paramilitary forces. HRCP received credible evidence that showed such killings had indeed taken place. Across Balochistan, the HRCP team found widespread instances of ‘disappearance’, of torture inflicted on people held in custody and on those feeling from their house and hearth in fear. (HRCP, P. 2, 2006).

Throughout interviews within Balochistan (recorded in the Al Jazeera, 2013 documentary), many Baloch also insisted on the credibility of such abuses; according to one Baloch local, “The army’s injustices here are unbelievable. The soldiers arrest poor people, steal their food and animals. They burn people alive and throw them in vats of boiling tar.” A Baloch leader interviewed by Al Jazeera echoed similar discontentment with the army: “The army and intelligence agents kidnap them and we know nothing about them for years.... They burn down our homes and then ask us for peace.” A report by the Voice for Baloch Missing Persons (VBMP) records a similar story:

Security forces during their operations set fire to crops and looted valuables of the inhabitants. Such incidents took place in all parts of Balochistan and footages of these heinous human rights violation are present in social media uploaded by affected areas’ people and organizations and these acts are undeniable (VBMP, 2016).

Indeed, a Human Rights Watch report records multiple witness and victim accounts of such abuses and disappearances, with the youngest victim only 12 years old.

Of the 45 detailed cases, the HRW report evaluated, “None of the victims, their relatives or eyewitnesses to the alleged disappearances interviewed by Human Rights Watch blamed armed Baloch groups,” but rather operations connected to the central government (HRW, 2011). The results of such actions by the central government forces have affected mostly civilians. While the exact numbers of disappeared remains unknown, figures as high as 18,000 (Baloch/VBMP, 2014) and 15,000 (Asian Legal Resource Centre, 2014)<sup>10</sup> have been cited, with more conservative estimates at 10,000 (Ahmed, 2015; HRCP/Hadid, 2017; Asian Legal Resource Centre, 2014). These actions nevertheless have undoubtedly instilled further resentment among the Baloch population (Sareen, 2010).

Even regardless of who is to blame, it is clear that the ethnic Baloch people perceive the central government to be largely at fault for such abuses. Perhaps this, in part, can be explained by the HRCP finding that there remains a lack of accountability by the government for the abuses that have taken place, and the thousands that have been displaced due to violence (HRCP, P. 4, 2006). A UN statement on enforced disappearances also seems to uphold the validity of such actions (ICJ, 2016). In fact, some analysis from secondary sources suggests Islamabad’s responses to the current insurgency are far more brutal than the repression seen during in the 1970s (Wirsing, 2008; Harrison, 2006).

The insurgents and counterinsurgents are locked in a battle over winning the support of the population. Indiscriminate attacks is a factor that influences which side will win the population support, as such attacks indicate a failure to protect the

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<sup>10</sup> Written statement submitted to the United Nations by Asian Legal Resource Centre, 2014

population. This would especially impact the credibility of the central government, which is responsible for guaranteeing the safety of citizens (Lynn, P. 23, 2010). That these violations have taken place by the federal government against civilians also suggests an insufficiency of actionable intelligence. Going back to preliminary insurgent literature, the research argues that intelligence is significant in an insurgency because it is often difficult to visibly know the difference between insurgents and civilians. Therefore, intelligence is imperative in order to attack the correct targets and not alienate a population through unjust killings. The actions of the security forces and the results of the paramilitary operations suggest that, to some extent, the counterinsurgents do not have enough intelligence. As insurgency literature suggests, the population can provide substantial intelligence on insurgent movements, and therefore a cycle of alienation would further inhibit counterinsurgents from gaining intelligence from locals. Islamabad's counterinsurgency operations have likely served to reinforce Baloch popular support for the insurgents.

### 3.3 Nature of Insurgent Targeting

This section of research provides data on the trajectory of the insurgency, the insurgent actors, and their targets. It attempts to showcase the movements of insurgents, inform some numerical data on the extent of violence and targets of insurgents, and depict what years have seen an increase in attacks. The attack count by insurgent groups is important because it suggests how active a group may be, and looking at the change in attacks over time provides insight into when the insurgency was most active, and if it is still at all active. Preliminary data suggest that attacks often target infrastructure, government personnel, and foreigners. The data in this section is from the Global



Terrorism Database,<sup>11</sup> in which attack data pertaining to Baloch separatist groups has been isolated and represented in graphs.

Figure 3 demonstrates Balochistan's active separatist groups and their total attack count from the years 2002 to 2017 (although the first claimed attack was in 2004).

According to such data, the Baloch Republican Army is the most active group based on attack number, followed by Baloch Liberation Front, Baloch Liberation Army, United Baloch Army, and then a few others. Figure 4 shows group lethality based on total number of people killed per group.

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<sup>11</sup> For more information on GTD, see: National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2018). Global Terrorism Database [Data file]. Retrieved from <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd>

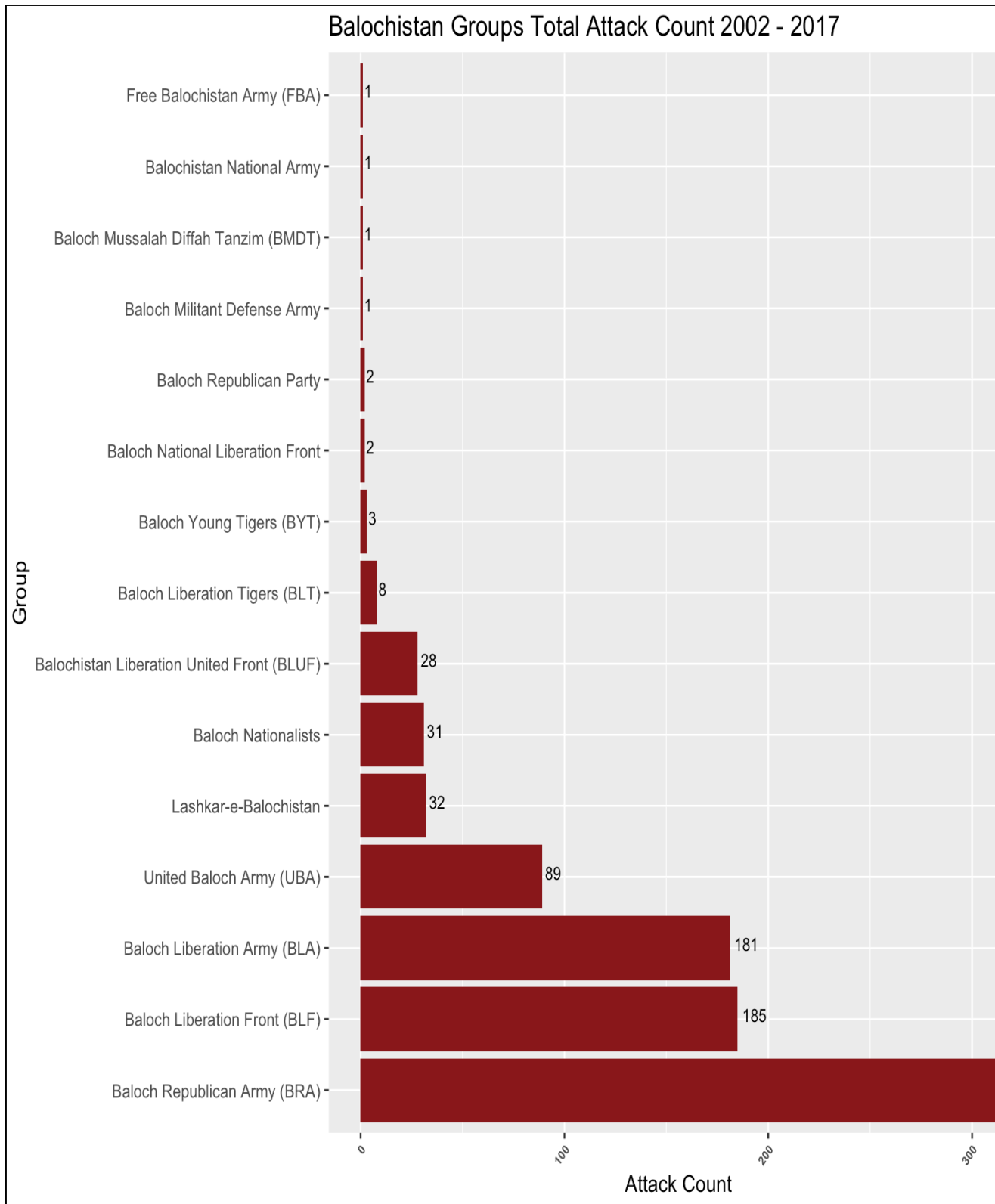
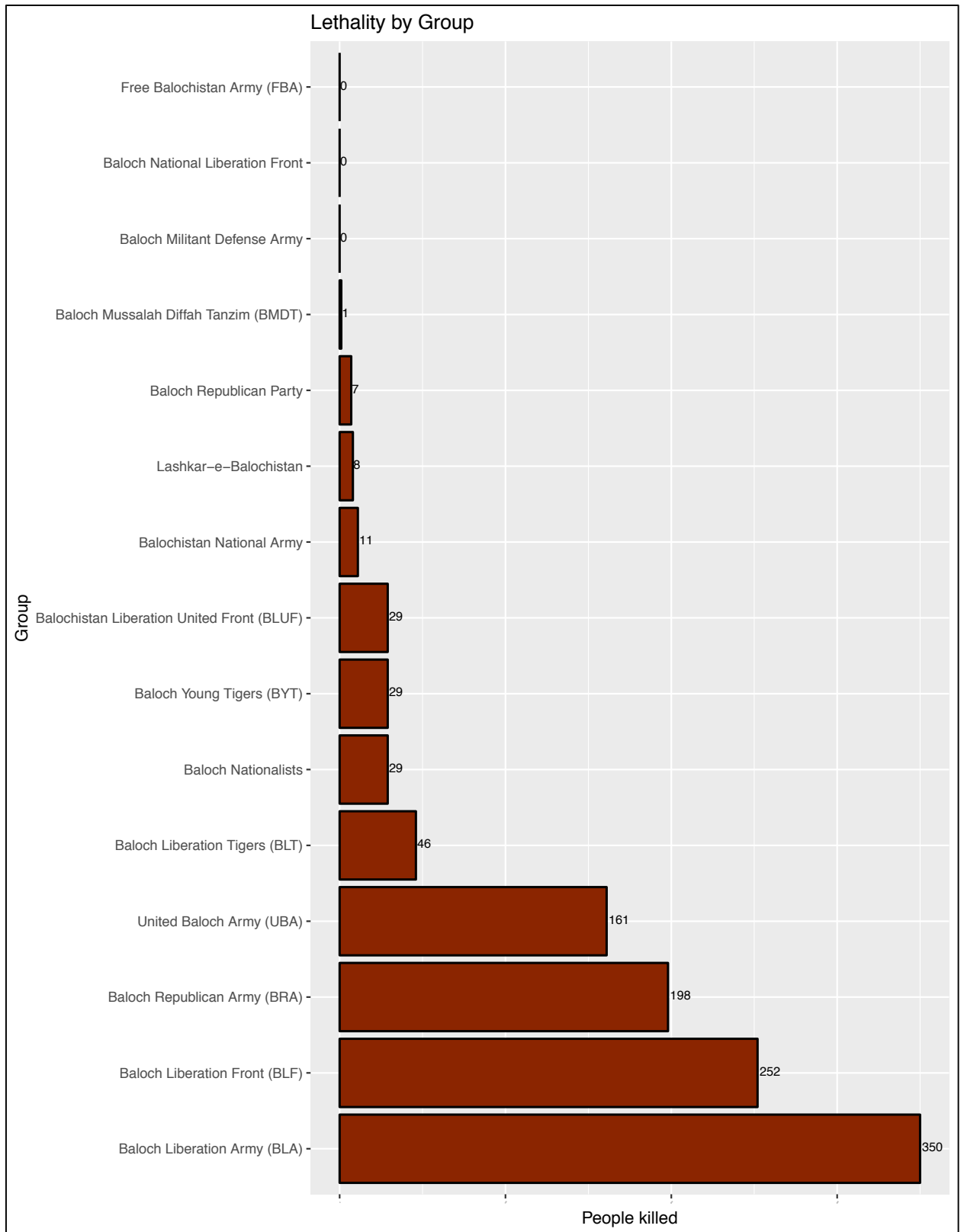


Figure 3: Balochistan Insurgent Group Attack Counts 2002-2017



*Figure 4: Balochistan Insurgent Group Total Number Killed*

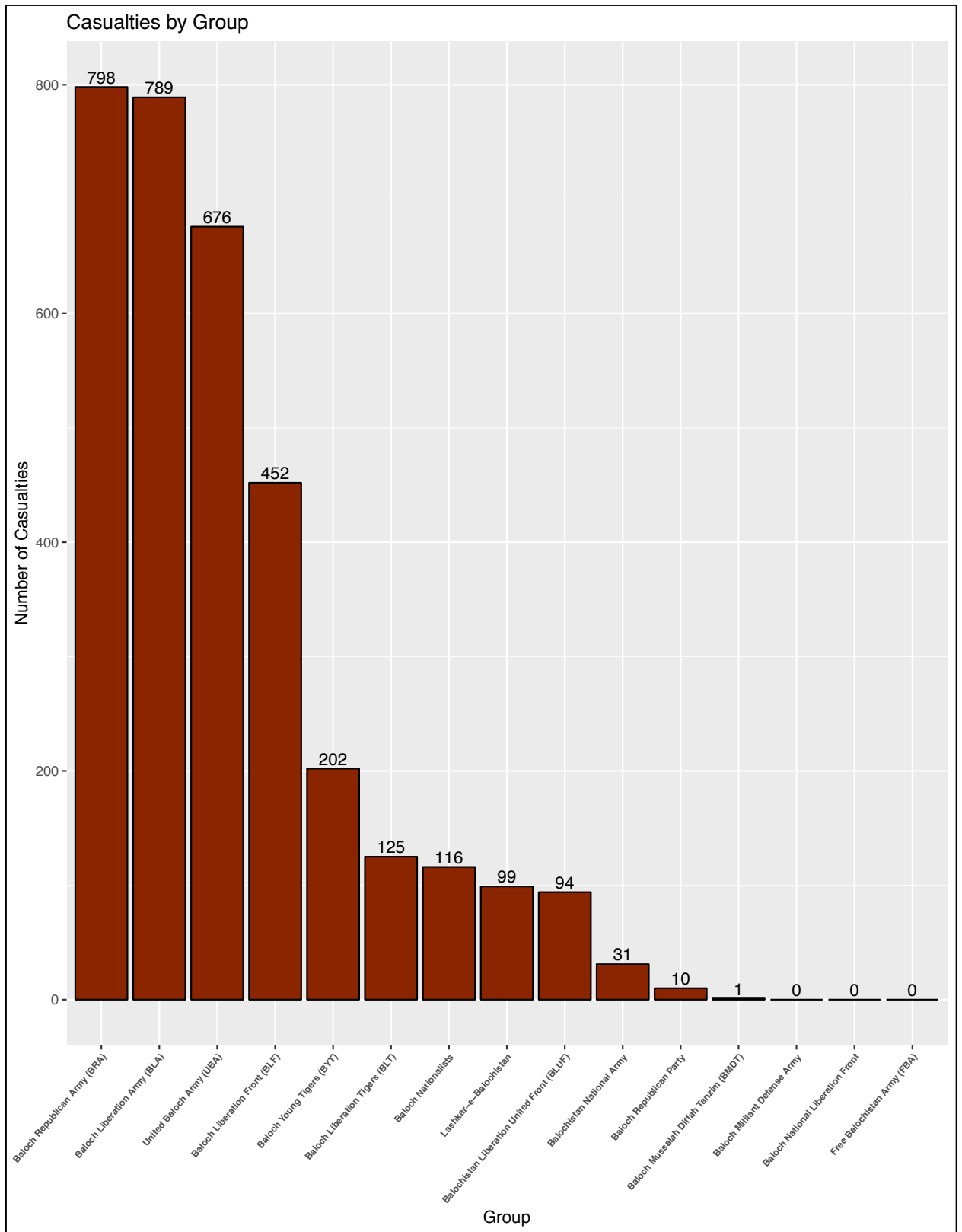


Figure 5: Balochistan Insurgent Group Total Numbers of Killed + Injured

Based on this data, despite that the Baloch Republican Army has launched significantly more attacks than its counterparts at 312 attacks, it is the Baloch Liberation Army that has been the most lethal group in terms of total numbers killed. It is important to remember that not all of the targets of the insurgent groups are designed to kill, but that many target infrastructure or utilities; according to preliminary research, these are perceived as signs of the central government's encroachment. Indeed, data looking at the targets of insurgent groups found that that the Baloch Republican Army overwhelmingly targeted utilities in their attacks, with 140 of their attacks targeting utilities, whereas comparatively, the next highest was the United Baloch Army (19), and the Baloch Liberation Army (18). Conversely, the Baloch Liberation Front targeted the most government targets<sup>12</sup> with 99 attacks towards government targets, followed by Baloch Republican Army (87), and Baloch Liberation Army (80). Data looking at civilian targets was comparatively low in claimed attacks, where the Baloch Liberation Front had the most attacks towards civilian targets (39), followed by Baloch Liberation Army (33). Here, it is significant to note that settlers in Balochistan have been targeted by insurgent groups, and therefore can count as civilian targets.

Figure 6 below charts the top four most active insurgent groups and their targets, and the targets of unclaimed attacks, from 2002-2017. Figure 7 charts attacks from 1979-2001 for a comparison of attack levels and attack targets prior to the insurgency. The results suggest that while civilian targets were low under claimed attacks, unclaimed attacks saw a higher proportion of civilian targets.<sup>13</sup> Government targets still remained a

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<sup>12</sup> Government targets were counted as Government (General), Police, Military, Government (Diplomatic) as per GTD Codebook

<sup>13</sup> There are a few reasons as to why some militant groups do not claim attacks, including: (1) some groups do not need to claim attacks to reach the target audience; (2) claiming attacks increases the targeting by

higher target count, however. Ultimately, the results indicate that insurgent groups that claimed their attacks claimed far fewer civilian target groups. A Human Right Watch report found that some insurgent groups, citing the BLA and BLUF as examples, claimed civilian attacks that were *non-Baloch* civilians (HRW, 2011).

*Attack Group Targets 2002-2017 Figure 6*

Group Name	Total Attack #	Utilities #	Government #	Civilians #
BRA	312	140	87	13
BLF	185	2	99	39
BLA	181	18	80	33
UBA	89	19	29	13
Unclaimed	2,600	273	878	546

*Attack Group Targets 1979-2001 Figure 7*

Group Name	Total Attack #	Utilities #	Government #	Civilians #
Claimed <sup>14</sup>	18	0	4	8
Unclaimed	44	2	12	11
Claimed + Unclaimed	62	2	16	19

Figure 5 shows the total casualties by group, including both the death count and those injured. This data would perhaps suggest which groups are directly impacting the

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counterinsurgents; (3) if an attack is unsuccessful or kills unintended targets, insurgents may be uninclined to claim the attack; (4) if the response of the attack is ill-received by the insurgent support group, insurgents may not claim the attack.

<sup>14</sup> Claimed attacks are consolidated due to low-activity (and likely non-Baloch insurgent) groups: Pro-Kabul Provocateurs, Political Group, Pathan Tribal Group, Sindhi nationalists, Tribal Group, Muslim Militants, Ittehad-i-Islami, Shia Muslim extremists, Kalpar Tribesmen, Kaka-Tribesmen, Tribesmen

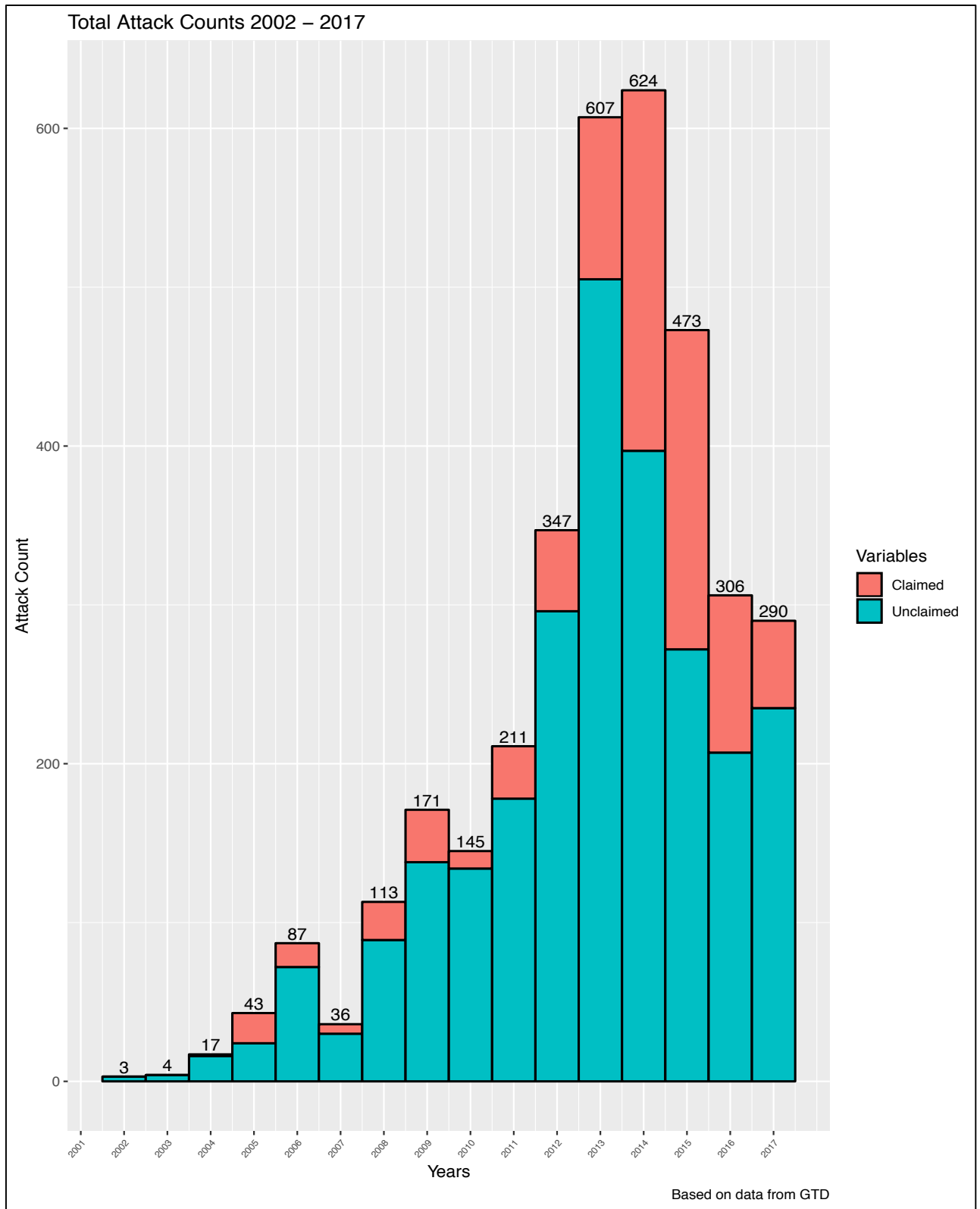
most people. Here, the Baloch Republican Army has the highest number of casualties at 798, followed closely by the Baloch Liberation Army at 789. The following graph (Figure 8 below), includes claimed and unclaimed attacks by year. Claimed attacks would include any attack from the insurgent groups listed in the earlier graphs. Unclaimed attacks are limited to include any attack within the boundaries of Balochistan: this means that there is a greater margin of error in whether every unclaimed attack is related to the Balochistan insurgency, and would not include attacks related to the insurgency outside of Balochistan (perhaps into a neighboring province or along the border with Afghanistan). Figure 9 similarly mimics the attack count pattern in representing casualties by year, with the exception that 2012 saw a disproportionately higher casualty count than the attack count would indicate.

This data allows for an interpretation of the trajectory of the Balochistan Insurgency. 2012 through 2014 seem to be the peak years of the insurgent activity, yet even in the following years, there is higher activity levels than the first seven years since the start of the insurgency. While this thesis does not attempt to explain the sudden rise in attacks, two prominent events that happened in Balochistan in 2013 include the May 2013 Provincial Assembly elections, and a 7.7 magnitude earthquake in September that killed hundred in Balochistan. While GTD has not yet included updated data from 2018, news articles of recent attacks suggest continued activity.

For support levels, a lack of indiscriminate attacks would indicate higher support from the population. The focus of insurgent groups appears to be discriminate, targeting establishments that coincide with their cause, such as government and utility targets. A focus on targets that reflect local grievances has a better chance of gaining more support,

as suggested by insurgent literature. These results are indicative of increasing the likelihood of further popular support.





*Figure 8: Balochistan Attack Counts Including Claimed and Unclaimed*

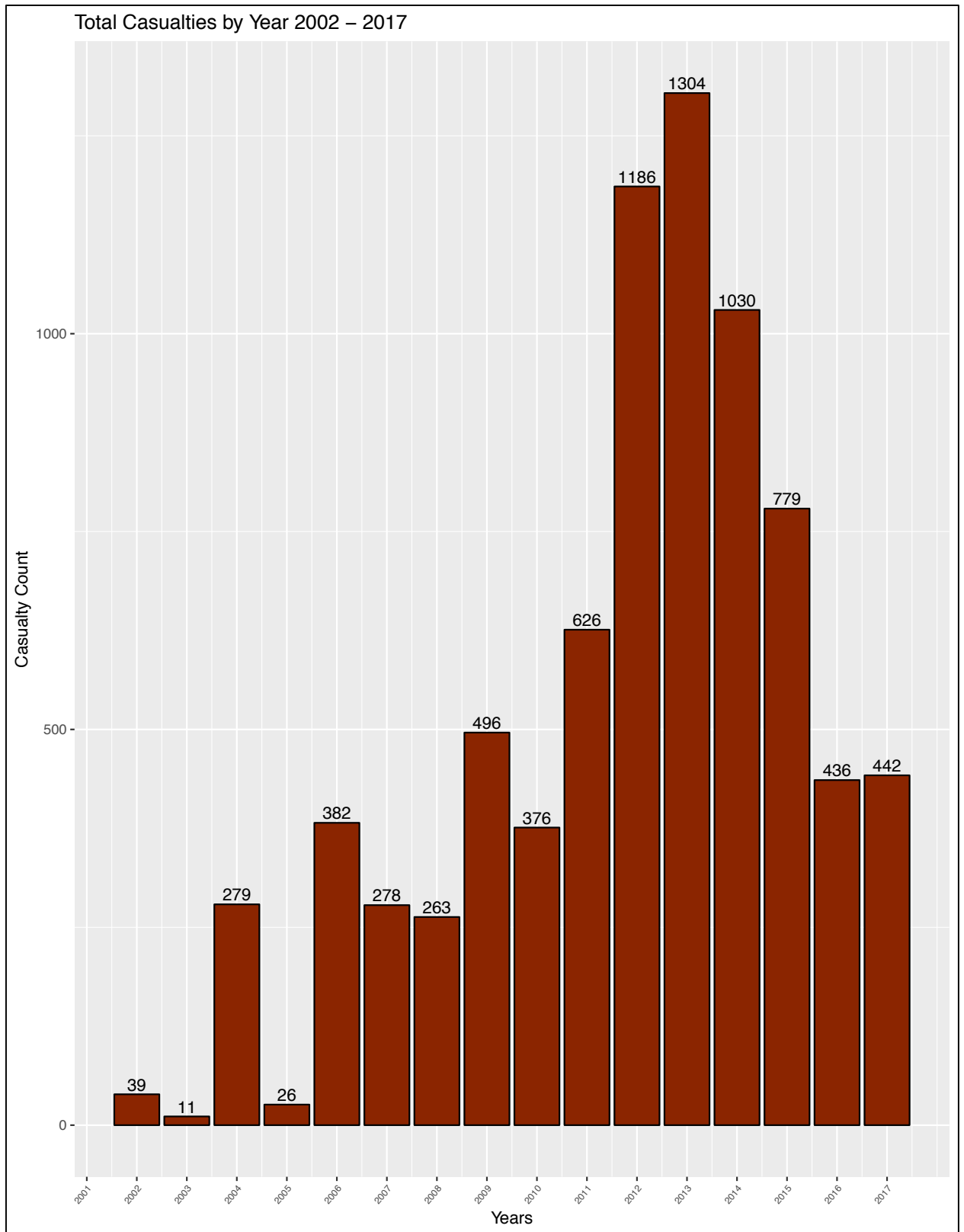


Figure 9: Casualty Count by Years 2002-2017

This research also looked at inter-group conflict. Preliminary insurgent research suggested that insurgencies with multiple actors tend to last longer, as it is more difficult to end an insurgency given competing interests of many groups (Connable & Libicki, 2010). Conventional wisdom argues that when there are multiple actors competing for support, this would split the support pool due to outbidding between groups vying for support. However, a lack of inter-group conflict would suggest that this may not be the case. As mentioned by an insurgent leader, “Perhaps later we may unify our command since we are one ethnic group. We fight to free our people” (Aljazeera, 2012). This research found only one instance of inter-group conflict, in which the Baloch Liberation Army targeted the United Baloch Army on June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015 in the Dera Bugti District. There was no other case in GTD data of a Baloch insurgent group targeting another, indicating that there may be a more unified separatist objective among all groups. Therefore, this insurgency may enjoy a much broader support base, given the lack of competing interests and outbidding among groups. This would also support the preliminary research findings that the insurgent groups are expanding to include leaders among the middle class, not solely tribal leaders. After all, tribal leaders tend to have separate and competing interests (as was the case in the previous insurgency). Unity among objectives and support in the insurgency could allow for increased credibility of the local grievances (Heinkel & DeVillafranca, p. 65, 2016). Fundamentally, these results suggest that there is greater unity, and therefore more likely to mobilize a broader support base.

### 3. 4 Insurgency Evolution: Gwadar & Current Insurgency and Past Insurgency Differences

In analyzing why the current insurgency has outlasted the length of its predecessors, it is crucial to examine what makes the current one different. Unfortunately, some preliminary literature sources conflicted each other. If a middle class, as opposed to tribal sardars, is leading the ongoing insurgency, this would suggest a broader support base. Yet, as the preliminary research notes, some sources say that tribal leaders still lead the insurgent movement while others say it is the middle class. The implications of each are significant.

To draw back from the previous section, an absence of inter-group targeting is indicative that tribal leaders are perhaps not the main force behind the current insurgency, given that tribes tend to clash. Selig Harrison's analysis indicates the same— that the inability for Pakistan to attribute the insurgency to tribal conflict has been a unique marker of the current insurgency (Harrison, 2006). It is not to say that tribalism has no influence at all in Balochistan, however, like Grare notes in his research (Grare, 2013), even the killings of Akbar Bugti and Balach Marri did not stop the insurgency. On the contrary, the graphs in the previous section demonstrate a drastic increase in insurgent activity. A Dawn news article, among other sources, also confirms the presence of strong separatist support among the educated middle class through interviews with students and office-holders who are part of the Balochistan Student Organization— Azad (Ahmad, 2012). In fact, one office-holder directly states, “Women and children, sardars and the common man... We stand together,” (Ahmad, 2012). The Bugtis and Marris are still popular leaders, however the members of the middle class have joined the ranks of the

most popular alongside them, creating an expansive and unified movement (Harrison, 2006). Yet, some scholars suggest that while the movement has expanded to include more middle class involvement, there has also been increased friction between some elements of the middle class and tribal chiefs; despite this however, “the ballast for Baloch nationalism is coming from the middle-classes” (Sareen, 2010).

Malik Siraj Akbar, editor of the banned online newspaper Baloch Hal, has also suggested that new supporters are fighting the conflict in Balochistan with the media, through online political activism using sites like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube; he argues that the central government has “equally engaged in a full-fledged battle with the Baloch media” (Ahmad, 2012). Indeed, Baloch Hal and the BSO-Azad are active on twitter, Facebook, and other news sources condemning the forced disappearances and extrajudicial killings in Balochistan. Media posts from the BSO-Azad Facebook page also encourage a Pro-Baloch separatist message. Days before the 27<sup>th</sup> of March of 2019, the BSO-Azad posted about promoting an online social media campaign on March Black Day (27<sup>th</sup> of March), the day when Balochistan lost its sovereignty to Pakistan. Referencing the Central Spokesperson Baloch Students Organization Azad (BSO-A) in a Facebook post, strong rhetoric illustrates the separatist message:

“....observing 27<sup>th</sup> March as Black Day is an attempt to divert the attention of international community, international media and United States towards the state barbarism and is also aimed to aware them about the historical background of this forceful annexation of Pakistan—which is not accepted by Baloch nation in any condition” (BSO-Azad Facebook Page, 24<sup>th</sup> of March, 2019).

It is not the only page of its kind. Other pages such as the Baloch National Movement (BNM) also support the cause, with postings both in English and Urdu.

An academic paper by Abdul Iqbal also analyzed the impact on mobilization that this new medium of promoting the separatist agenda has had on the Balochistan insurgency. This study finds that social media has become a platform that is rapidly spreading the separatist message not just across Balochistan, but even reaching people outside Balochistan (Iqbal, P. 136, 2011). The author found an extensive list of Facebook pages in which the separatist ideology dominated most of them, and many had foreign fans in addition to domestic (Iqbal, P. 137-139, 2011). The use of online and media sources for mobilization is also a well-known tool for the educated middle class. Iqbal notes leadership in the insurgency with both the major tribal leaders and the middle class (Iqbal, P. 142, 2011). Increased mobilization through social media would allow for a greater support base due to a greater population to become exposed to the message. Indeed, as mentioned earlier in this section, the messages not only include some English language, but posts that directly target the international community. Moreover, it also allows a population to support insurgents without having to directly engage in militant activities. The middle-class support and leadership, in addition to the new platform of social media to project the separatist message, are developments unique to the current insurgency, both of which heavily encourage broad, domestic-level support.

The Gwadar port is another newfound grievance. Plans to make Gwadar a free port were mentioned in papers such as Dawn as early as 1973. Historically, Gwadar was bestowed to the Sultan of Oman by the Khan of Kalat, which it administered for nearly two centuries until September of 1958, when Pakistan reclaimed the land in a \$3 million-

dollar deal (Kanwal, 2018). The potential to turn the rural fishing village into a deep-water port was discovered in 1954 through the US Geological Survey (Harris, 2019). More surveys were undertaken to determine the viability of a port in the location even during the 1970s (Dawn Archives, 1973). Actual construction did not begin until 2002, as a Chinese investment project. Gwadar has been mentioned frequently as a new source of grievance among the Baloch population, especially given the Chinese presence in Gwadar due to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project. Insurgents have targeted the Chinese presence in Balochistan as well, affirming the sentiment among the militant actors through attacks such as the November 23<sup>rd</sup> Chinese consulate attack (Ahmad & Masood, 2018) or the August attack on a bus carrying Chinese workers (Yousafzai 2018).

It has been confirmed through many sources that the Baloch perspective on the Gwadar Port is negative and seen to have little benefit for the local population (Al Jazeera, 2012; ICG, 2006; Grare, 2013; Khan 2009; VBMP, 2016). What is more, the profitability of Gwadar is questionable from an economic standpoint as well: a study by the Center for Strategic and International Studies found that the Gwadar Port was one of the Belt and Road developments that faced significant profitability challenges given its lack of “connectivity to the hinterland,” one of the criteria the report uses to assess economic challenges (Funaiolo & Hillman, P. 4, 2018). In fact, the locals in Gwadar have suffered detriment as the result of the project. Not only has unemployment among many educated workers been an issue (Al Jazeera, 2012), but other accounts from the Voice of the Baloch Missing Persons describe how life has been increasingly difficult in Gwadar:

“...in the town of Gawadar local people are given a card, where out-siders cannot get in to the city, while insiders cannot move somewhere out of the city

without the permission of security agencies after a painful process. The areas' socio-economy is based on fishing, but fishermen are also stopped from autonomously moving into deep sea for all time except limited hours. In this way, the area's people are effected the worst by Gawadar port which is given to Chinese" (VBMP, 2016).

While it is clear that Gwadar holds geostrategic implications for China and Pakistan against India, if the port cannot produce any profitable benefit for the people of Balochistan, even the long-term outcome could sustain grievances.

Ultimately, the current insurgency has manifested itself in a unique way from previous conflicts, while still retaining deep-rooted grievances. Critical differences in leadership and support, the role of social media, and Gwadar are some of the key contrasts among the current insurgency from the previous one that are indicative of greater popular support. These factors have served to either broaden population support of insurgency, project the separatist message, or incite new grievances, all of which hold implications to impacting insurgent support.

### 3. 5 External Support

The final variable that this research attempts to evaluate is external support. External support holds implications for an insurgent's ability to outlast and endure. This project must then dedicate some analysis to whether this may be a factor in the current Balochistan Insurgency. As mentioned in the preliminary research, the consensus on whether insurgents are receiving foreign aid is fractured. Many authors believe that the insurgents are receiving some form of foreign aid (Bansal, 2008; Mazahar et al. 2012; Javaid & Jahangir, 2015), whereas others find a lack of hard evidence on this case (ICG,



2013; Chandran, 2006; Wirsing, 2008; Grare, 2013). This research will analyze news articles and political rhetoric to attempt to inform this variable, as the implication for insurgency length are significant.

Islamabad's main suspicions and blames for external support towards the Baloch insurgents is with India. Indian prime minister Narendra Modi and India's ambassador to the UN have made statements condemning the central government's actions in Balochistan. In September of 2016, India's permanent representative to the UN declared that "This is a country (Pakistan), which has systematically abused and violated the human rights of its own citizens, including in Balochistan," marking the first time that India has brought up the issue to the UN (Balachandran, 2016). Indian Prime Minister Modi also mentioned Balochistan in his Independence Day speech (Haidar, 2016). Perhaps more concerning was the case of an alleged Indian spy, Kulbhushan Jadhav, who was arrested near the Iran-Balochistan border in 2016 by the ISI, with some reports linking him to India's Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) of its intelligence. In a story published on an Indian news outlet, *The Quint*, which was later deleted (although an archived copy remains), claims of multiple RAW sources referred to Jadhav as "not a high-grade operative," with ambiguity surrounding his reasons for being in Balochistan (Nandy, 2018). It does not seem that Jadhav was providing aid or supporting the insurgency, however. It is important to note that India likely has strategic interests in gaining intelligence on Chinese activity within Balochistan, given that China has emerged as India's rival, and most Chinese investments are taking place in Balochistan. This means that while India may not necessarily be backing the insurgency, there is an incentive to be in Balochistan.

Regarding Afghanistan, there have been allegations on Indian involvement in training Baloch separatist groups and supplying material aid from within Afghanistan (Weinstein, 2017), yet these remain allegations. Ultimately, aside from political rhetoric, there is a lack of evidence proving any external involvement, and therefore no position can be made regarding the variable of external support for this research. Not enough credible information is available to make a decision on whether external support is a real factor in the current insurgency, despite that there is a real possibility of external involvement.

#### CHAPTER IV: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The Balochistan Insurgency is a complicated conflict with many dimensions. As is perhaps evident from this paper, the insurgency has also been rapidly evolving even while containing many of the same grievances as past conflicts. The findings of this paper seem to support the hypothesis that increased support has driven the current insurgency's resilience. After all, a central evolution of this conflict is the fact that it is *broader and more expansive*, indicative of a robust support base. This research suggests that support has increased through new channels, in addition to the continued existence of former grievances.

That the leadership is held by the middle class is crucial to suggesting greater support. Unlike past insurgencies, which were largely lead by only tribal leaders, a middle class is more unified with a common goal. Tribal leaders often held competing interests, and therefore the actions and support for the past insurgencies were often

fractured along tribal lines. This no longer appears to be the case. Similarly, the second point that suggests increased support is the lack of inter-group conflict. GTD data showed no sign of fighting between separatist groups with the exception of one attack. This is indicative of a unified goal, and supportive of the likelihood of middle class leadership. It also suggests that the separatist groups are not attempting to outbid each other to compete for popular support. A lack of competition would create a wider support base for the separatist groups and some level of unification surrounding the cause. A further point is the new medium of social media for spreading the insurgent movement, both domestically and internationally. This would not only connect and reinforce sympathizers, but encourage greater support for the insurgent cause. The Gwadar Port is a new and urbanized grievance that has also contributed to the sentiment of colonization, and therefore amounts to an additional complaint affecting the urban area's population. These factors are particularly unique to the current insurgency, and yet all past grievances have also remained unchanged. This research found validity in both the economic grievances and the human rights abuse grievances that further instilled animosity towards the government, which insurgency literature suggests is more likely to lead to greater insurgent support.

The factors that have set this insurgency apart from its predecessors, and the factors that have not (in other words, those grievances that still plague the Baloch population), both suggest that the insurgents have reached greater support levels. These factors— pre-existing grievances, CT Operations/Human Rights Abuse, Nature of Insurgent Targeting, and Insurgency Evolution — are indicative of such outcomes based on insurgency trends. Governments that do not address the grievances of a population are

more likely to alienate that population. Similarly, operations and tactics that result in indiscriminate attacks and abuses against civilians would also result in alienation. The attack targets of separatist actors were largely discriminate, and lacked inter-group conflict, suggesting that the group targets represent the separatist cause, and there exists greater unification. Lastly, an expansive middle class involvement, separatist media campaign, and the additional grievances of Gwadar, all contribute to indicating greater popular support levels among the insurgent cause. While there may be no definitive marker for predicting an insurgency, and there is scarcely ever one explanation for such conflicts, this research perhaps can contribute a greater understanding into the factors at play within the ongoing insurgency. Increased popular support appears to be a contributing factor to the Balochistan Insurgency endurance.

#### 4.1 Limitations

- This research encountered a few limitations. First, the more evident limitations are those concerned with transparency and reliability of information. Pakistan is not a transparent country, and is frequently plagued with disinformation and propaganda. Therefore, this issue limited the amount of news sources that could credibly be used. There also remains the likelihood of substantial information that is not available which would have significant implications for this thesis.
- On a similar note, another limitation was the differences in the quality of data. The variables CT Operations and Nature of Insurgent Targeting were essentially measuring similar aspects of support— both were evaluating indiscriminate attacks to inform population alienation. The data provided by the Global Terrorism Database, however, is far more concrete and substantial, providing

more information on the attack, and including *all* recorded attacks. In evaluating the CT Operations, this data is not available in the same manner as the GTD. In fact, most of the information on the attacks by the central government include only those that were indiscriminate and involved human rights abuses, as they are made up of reports, investigations, interviews, and testimonies.

- A third limitation was the evolution of the insurgency, and the contradictions and conflicting assertions of sources. The current Balochistan Insurgency has been ongoing for over fifteen years, and therefore has likely evolved. Unfortunately, there is absence of substantial literature on Balochistan, and much of this literature does not take into account how the insurgency has changed throughout years. The case in 2006 has changed from the case in 2014: GTD data proves that the trajectory has had drastic rises in attacks, as well as declines. This also effects the assertions and claims of sources, which often directly clashed.

#### 4.2 Final Remarks

The implications of this research to the geopolitics of the region are continued destabilization risks within the province if the grievances and issues of the Baloch people are not just acknowledged by the central government, but *addressed*. This is not necessarily a new realization, however; this has been the case for the past insurgencies. Yet, this research has unique implications concerning how the central establishment will likely need to address these issues. Due to the indications of a broader support base fueling the current insurgency, Islamabad will likely need to appeal to the entire Baloch population to see any reconciliation and decreased volatility. In the past, the central government was able to play off tribal feuds as driving the insurgency, and strike deals

with the tribes in order to bring about an end to the militancy— this situation will likely no longer be the case. Islamabad will have to concede some responsibility for the grievances of the people in order to see a long-term decrease in violence and conflict. It is unlikely that insurgents will see an independent Balochistan; the success rate of violent insurgencies is low, and the longer an insurgency lasts, the more likely government forces will overtake the insurgents (Connable & Libicki, 2010). Even if the insurgency will soon decline, history proves that it is unlikely to be a long-term end, however. The following actions are steps that would aid in repairing relations between the Baloch people and the central establishment:

- Increasing provincial autonomy and accepting a secular provincial government
- More transparency in National-Provincial projects and economic deals
- Provincial participation and input on CPEC projects within the province, especially Gwadar Port
- Address the cases of enforced disappearances and human rights abuses, and provide the identities of those disappeared and found dead without identification, in addition to halting such operations
- Improve communications between Islamabad and Quetta

The challenge today is not only ending the violence by militants, but also repairing the long-standing issues and troubled relationship between the people of Balochistan and Islamabad. Even if the Security Forces are able to crush the insurgency today, tomorrow, or next week, without real changes between this relationship, we are likely to see another

similar insurgency arise in Balochistan in the future. This research suggests that the conflict today involves a broader population, and therefore the situation in Balochistan is perhaps getting worse, not better. In an age of modernization, technology, and globalization, a worsening conflict is likely to have greater costs and risks in the future, and therefore it is imperative that Islamabad makes some changes to the status quo situation in Balochistan.

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